

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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TAGS: PFOR, OREP, CZ, US

SUBJECT: CODEL CANNON- MEDIA TREATMENT OF SENATORS'
VISIT TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA

1. MEETINGS OF SENATORS GRIFFIN AND BEALL WITH HUSAK, STROUGAL, BILAK, BARCAK AND CHNOUPEK WERE MAIN ITEM ON APRIL 27 EVENING NEWS ON CZECHOSLOVAK RADIO AND TV.

2. " RUDE PRAVO" APRIL 28 CARRIES FOLLOWING MAJOR FRONT- PAGE ARTICLE, HEADED BY PHOTO OF SENATORS WITH HUSAK: BEGIN QUOTE KSC SECRETARY GENERAL AND CSSR NATIONAL FRONT CHAIRMAN GUSTAV HUSAK, TOGETHER WITH KSC PRESIDUM MEMBERS--- PRIME MINISTER LUBOMIR STROUGAL AND KSC SECRETARY VASIL BILAK-- RECEIVED ON FRIDAY AT HRZANSKY PALACE IN PRAGUE MEMBERS OF U . S. SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE, SENATORS ROBERT P. GRIFFIN AND GLENN BEALL, WHO HAD ARRIVED IN PRAGUE SAME MORNING FROM WARSAW.

IN THE COURSE OF THE CONVERSATION THERE WERE DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING IN PARTICULAR POSSIBILITIES OF EXPANDING ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN CSSR AND USA. AT THE SAME TIME IT WAS NOTED ON BOTH SIDES THAT IN THE PRESENT SITUATION, WHEN A LESSENING
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OF INTERNATIONAL TENSION IS BEING ATTAINED, THERE

EXIST FAVORABLE CONDITIONS FOR THIS. THE INTENSIFICATION OF MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS COOPERATION WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION IS DESIRABLE IN THE ECONOMIC AS WELL AS IN THE SCIENTIFIC- TECHNICAL AND CULTURAL FIELD, AND IS IN ACCORD WITH A POLICY OF PEACE AND WITH INTERESTS OF ALL PEOPLES WITHOUT REGARD TOTRATIVE SUCCESS; MEETING WAS HELD IN CROWDED, POORLY- VENTILATE ROOM, ATTENDED BY MANY LOCAL PRESS BUT VERY FEW FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, AND WAS MARRED BY POOR TRANSLATION. NEVERTHELESS, THUAN' S LOW- KEY, REASONED PRESENTATION WAS A PLUS FOR THE RVN DELEGATION IN AN AREA WHERE THEY HAVE HERETOFORE RELIED ON THE REGULAR ARVN SPOKESMAN, WHILE THE PRG DEL USED THE TELEPHONE FOR PRESS CONTACTS - S WELL AS ITS WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE. THERE WAS ALSO A NOTICEABLE STIR WHEN THUAN ANNOUNCED THAT THE GVN HAS FOR THE FIRST TIME AUTHORIZED VIETNAMESE NEWSMEN TO ATTEND THE PRG SATURDAY MORNING PRESS

CONFERENCES. COMMENT: GVN IN PAST HAS UNSWERVINGLY DENIED LOCAL PRESS CONTACTS WITH PRG; THIS MOVE APPROVED PERSONELLY BY PRESIDENT

THIEU, APPEARS TO BE ANOTHER SIGN OF THE GROWING CONFIDENCE OF GVN VIS- A- VIS THE COMMUNISTS.

4. THUAN AND MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION FIELDIED QUESTIONS FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR, DURING THIS PERIOD:

A) RVN EXPRESSED IN VERY STRONG TERMS THE DETERMINATION OF THE RVN TO SECURE THE RETURN OF THE 410 MILITARY POWS STILL HELD BY THE PRG. THUAN STATED THAT THE RVN WOULD IF NECESSARY GO BEYOND CONTINUED INSISTENCE AT THE CONFERENCE TABLE AND ADOPT " NECESSARY MEASURES" TO GET THE MEN BACK, BUT DECLINED TO ELABORATE. COMMENT: THE RVN CONTINUES TO REGARD THIS POINT AS ABSOLUTELY NON- NEGOTIABLE. B) BG HIEP BRIEFED FROM MAP PURPORTEDLY SHOWING 189 LOCATIONS IN RVN, DRV, CAMBODIA AND LAOS WHERE OVER 26,000 MILITARY POWS INCLUDING OVER 60 OFFICERS ARE BEING HELD. HIEP NOTED THAT CONTINUED

DETENTION OF 60 OFFICERS INCLUDING COL. THO, COMMANDER OF THE AIRBORNE BRIGADE, HAS BEEN CONFIRMED SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN FORCED TO MAKE DECLARATIONS ON RADIO NAHOI, BUT AT TPJMC MEETINGS THE PRG HAS DENIED HOLDING THEM. GVN BELEIVES THEY ARE IN NVN CAMP NEAR CHINESE BORDER. RVN DEL STRESSED BOTH LEGAL AND HUMANITAJRAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OBJECTIONS TO CONTINUED DETENTION OF POWS AND CALLED FOR ASSISTANCE OF PRESS, THROUGH OBJECTIVE REPORTING, TO EXERT PRESSURE TO EFFECT RETURN OF POWS. C) REPLYING TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE SERIOUSNESS OF RECENT INFILTRATION OF MEN AND EQUIPMENT FROM NORTH VIETNAM, THUAN DREW HEAVILY ON FACTS CONTAINED IN PREVIOUS US STATEMENTS AND DIPLOMATIC

NOTE IN REPLYING, BUT ALSO NOTED RVN CONCERN
ABOUT ROAD- BUILDING IN WESTERN MR 1,
AND ADDED AN EXAMPLE OF A RECENTLY CAPTURED NVA IN VI THANH, WHO
WAS MASQUERADING AS PRG SOLDIER.

K) THUAN CHARACTERIZED CURRENT PRG STRATEGY IN PTJMC AS ONE OF
DELIBERATE DELAY. COMMUNISTS AT PRESENT TIME ARE NOT IN POSITION
TO GAIN MILITARY VICTORIES OR TERRITORY AND THEY THEREFORE ARE
PROTRACTING DEBATE IN HOPE THAT FUTURE SITUATION WILL BE MORE TO
THEIR

ADVANTAGE. THUAN AGAIN ADDED THAT CONTINUED ABSENCE OF GEN. TRA
WAS A SERIOUS OBSTACLE TO THE PROGRESS OF THE TALKS, AND HIS
RESPONSE
SEEMED TO IMPLY A JUDGMENT THAT THE FACT OF TRA' S ABSENCE WAS IN
ITSELF A SIGN THAT THE PRG WAS NOT TAKING THE TALKS SERIOUSLY.
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